



U.S. Department of Energy
Energy Efficiency
and Renewable Energy

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FreedomCAR & Vehicle Technologies Program

Vehicular Thermoelectric Applications

John Fairbanks
Department of Energy
Washington, DC

Annual Merit Review
North Bethesda Marriott
Rockville, Maryland
February 26, 2008



Thermoelectrics

electricity

Electricity from renewable heat

more reduce fuel consumption



reduce greenhouse

regulated

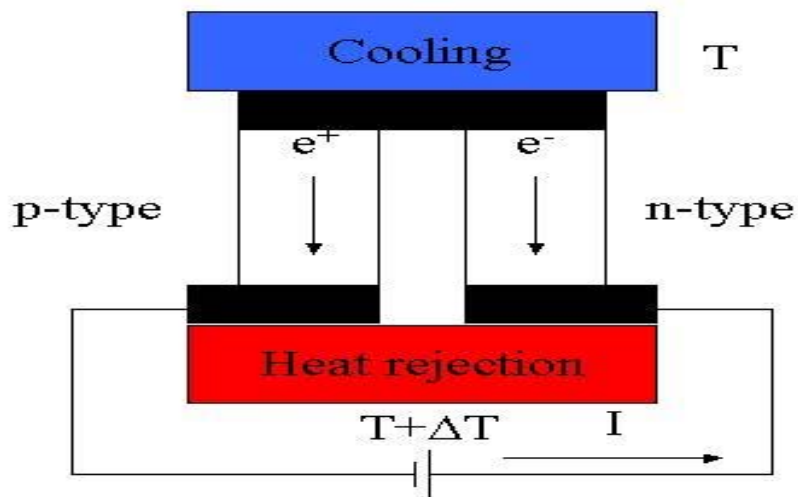
gases

emissions

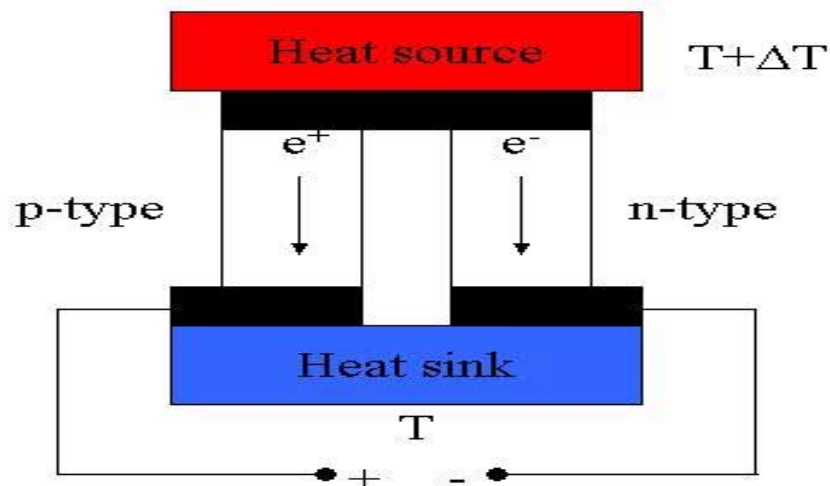
running



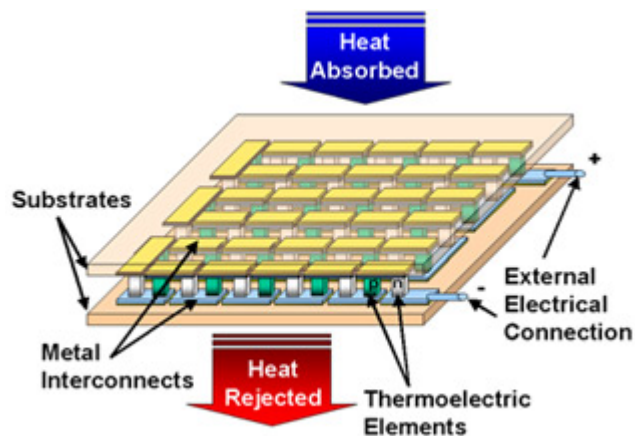
Thermoelectric Modules



Refrigeration



Power generation

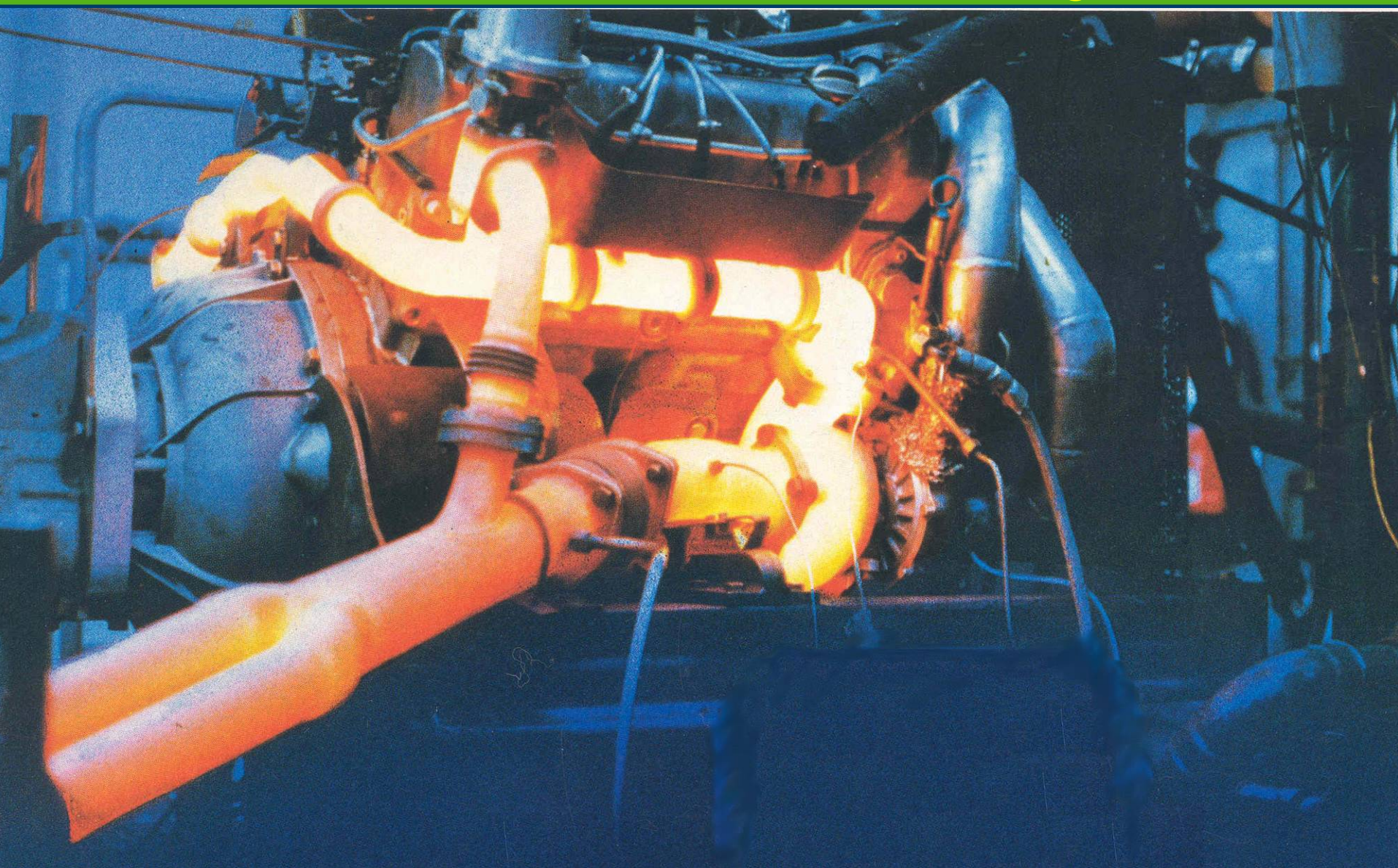




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Available Energy in Engine Exhaust





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BMW Series 5 , Model Year 2011, 3.0 Liter Gasoline Engine w/ Thermoelectric Generator





- Current Vehicular Air Conditioner uses Compressed R134-a Refrigerant Gas
 - > Vehicles leak 33-70 g/year R134-a
 - > R134-a Has 1300 times Greenhouse Gas Effect as Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)
 - > EU is proscribing use of R134-a
 - > Thermoelectric Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) is Candidate Replacement



- 69.5 Million Metric Tons/Year of CO₂e Released from Personal Vehicles in the US as a Result of Using Air Conditioning
- Additional significant amounts CO₂e released due to accidents and end of life vehicle salvage releasing R134-a



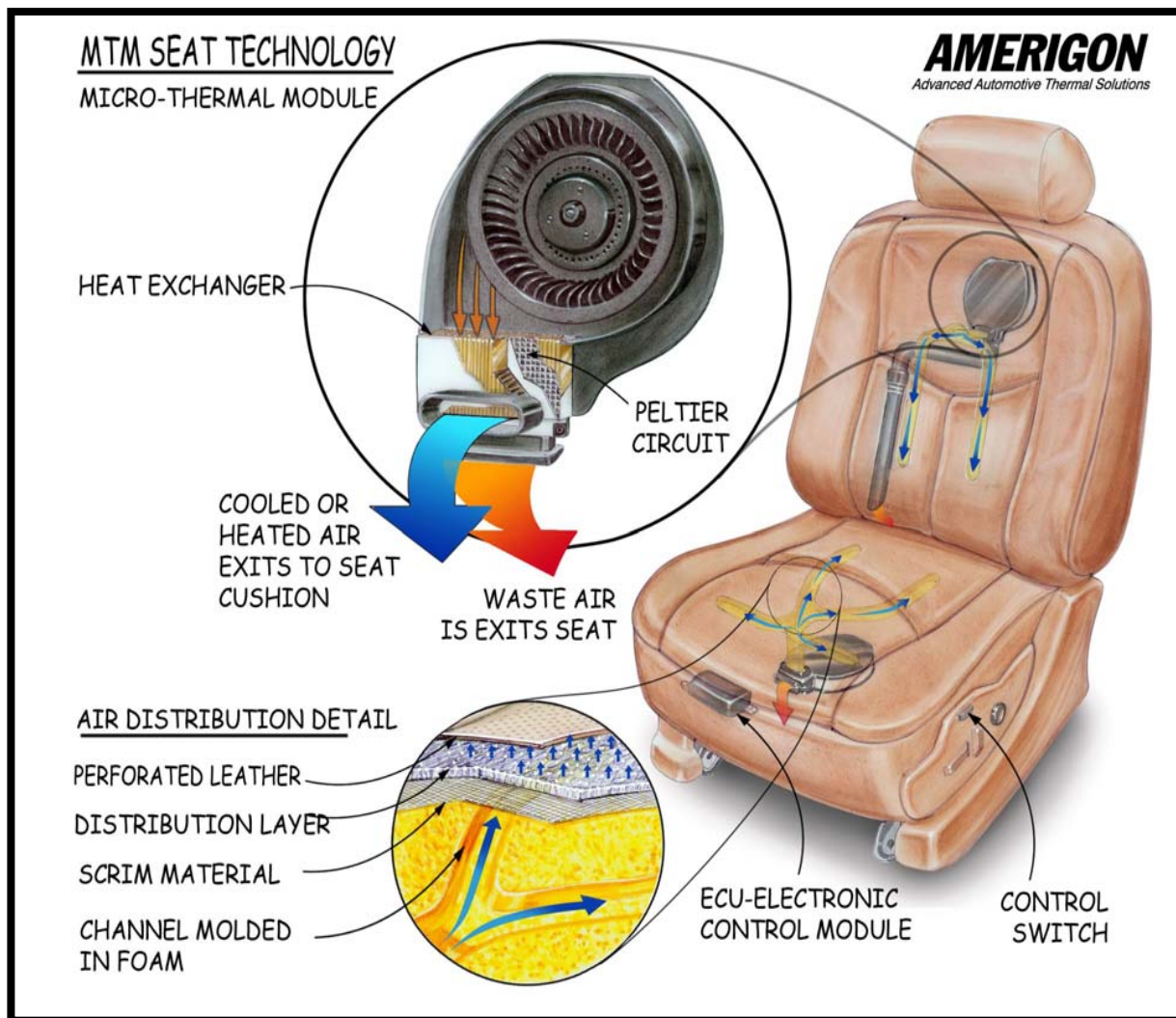
- Approach: Develop Zonal Thermoelectric based heating and cooling systems for cars, light trucks (SUV's, Pick-ups, Mini vans) and Heavy Duty Class 7 &8 Trucks which provides :
 - Reduced fuel consumption
 - Reduced Greenhouse Gases
 - Reduced toxic emissions (NOx & Particulates)
 - Increased engine-off comfort
 - Faster heating and cooling to comfort at start-up
 - Reduced maintenance costs
 - No moving parts
(Except for fans and heat transfer fluid circulating pump)
 - No refrigerant gas recharging



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Climate Control Seat™





Zonal TE devices located in the dashboard, headliner, A&B pillars and seats / seatbacks



- Occupant Heating During Battery Propulsion
(No Engine Heat)

- Resistance Heating Inefficient

Occupant Cooling

- Electric Compressor Refrigerant Gases
 - > Need R134-a Replacement

Thermoelectric HVAC Zonal Concept

- > Cooling COP 1.5

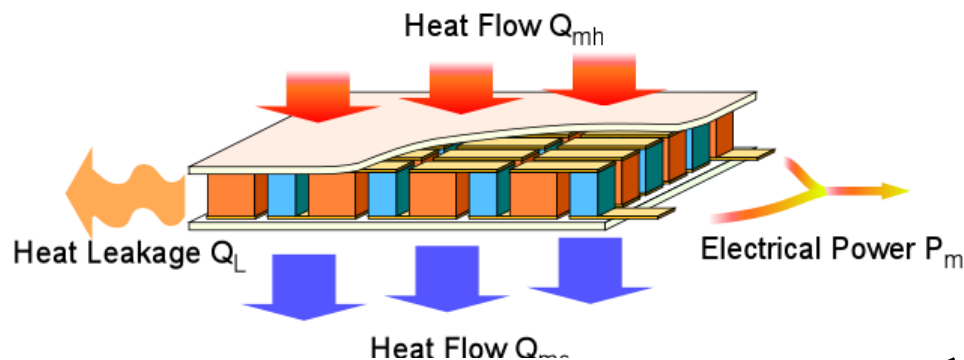
Augment or Replace Compressed Gas Unit

- > Heating COP 2.5

Replace Resistive Heater

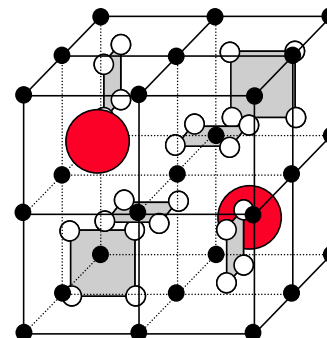
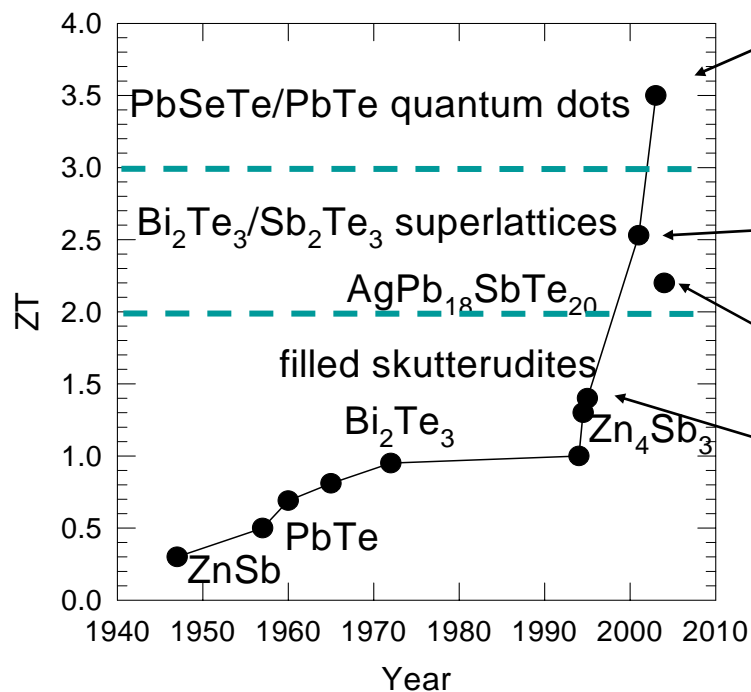
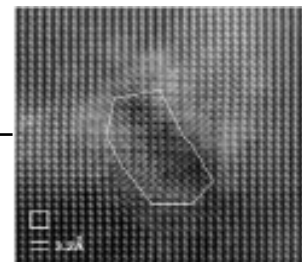
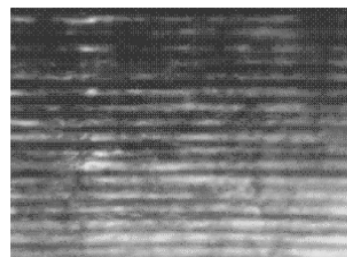
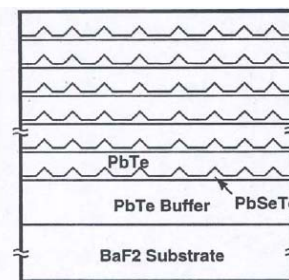


Recent Advances in Efficiency of Thermoelectric Materials



Efficiency:

$$\varepsilon = \frac{T_H - T_C}{T_H} \frac{\sqrt{1 + ZT} - 1}{\sqrt{1 + ZT} + \frac{T_C}{T_H}}$$



» Many recent thermoelectric material advances are nano-based



- Materials emerging in labs > 300 % more efficient than 1st generation thermoelectric generators
- > Major Challenges scaling up to commercially viable modules
- When 30 percent efficient cells available
 - > Replace automotive gasoline engine
 - > Dedicated combustor – burn virtually any fuel
 - Liquid, gas, pulverized solid (corn, wood etc)
 - Low combustion temperature – essentially no NOx
- End of Century
 - > Solar concentrators and encapsulated thermoelectric generators
 - Charge battery packs for electric cars
 - > RTG + Thermoelectric Generator Powertrains cars & buses
 - Expensive but 30 – 40 years life
 - Change vehicle body every 5 to 10 years



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Spacecraft Using Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generators

U.S. Radioisotope Missions

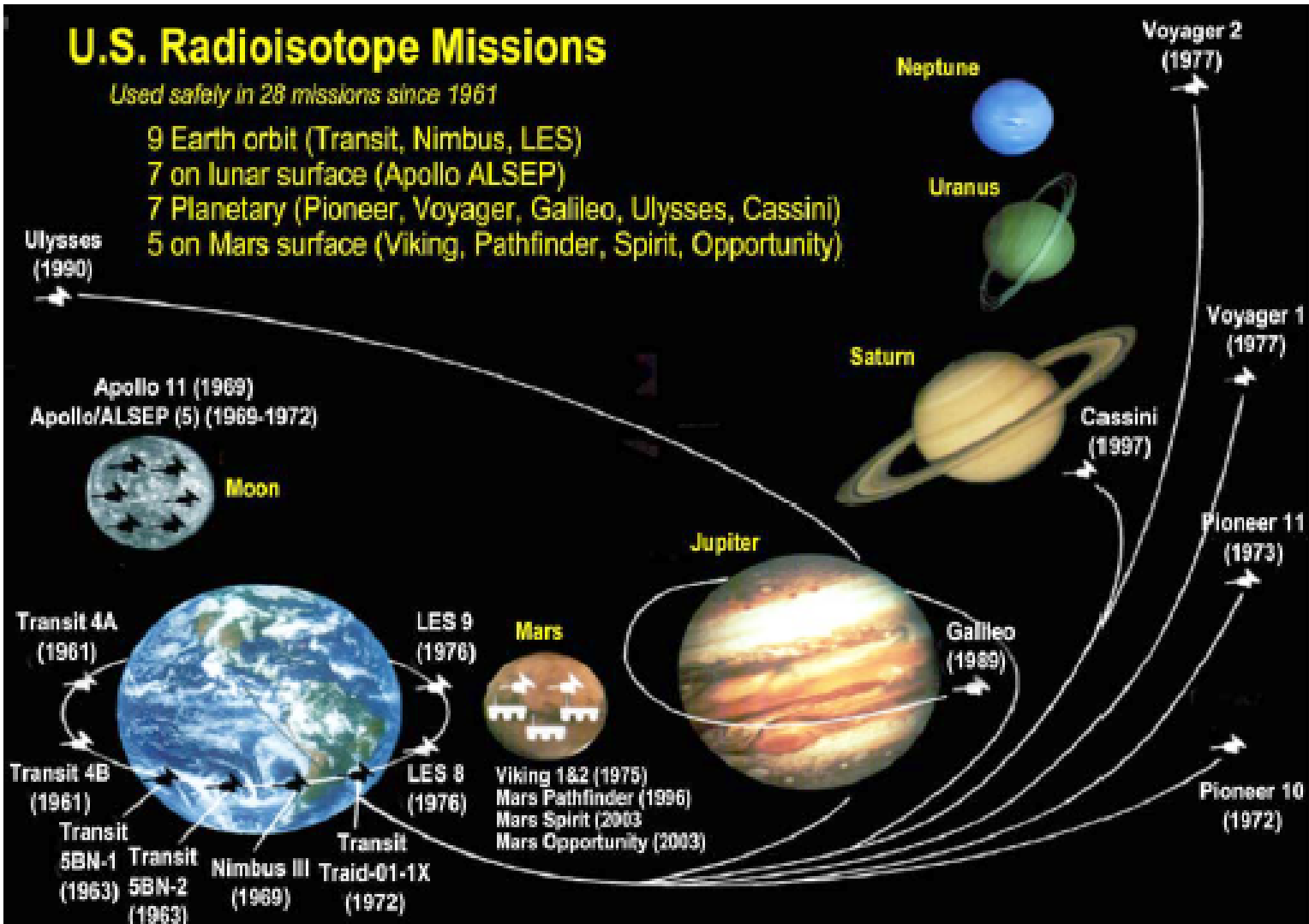
Used safely in 28 missions since 1961

9 Earth orbit (Transit, Nimbus, LES)

7 on lunar surface (Apollo ALSEP)

7 Planetary (Pioneer, Voyager, Galileo, Ulysses, Cassini)

5 on Mars surface (Viking, Pathfinder, Spirit, Opportunity)



Distances and Planets Are Not to Scale



- 1st generation thermoelectric generators